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TAGS: [MARR](#) [MOPS](#) [PREL](#) [NL](#) [NATO](#) [EUN](#)

SUBJECT: NETHERLANDS/NATO: DUTCH THOUGHTS ON NATO INFORMAL DEFENSE MINISTERIAL

REF: USNATO 529

Classified By: Political Counselor Andrew Schofer, reasons 1.4 (b,d)

1. (C) Summary: Polmiloff met with Sebastian Reyn (Deputy Director, Department of General Policy Affairs, MOD) September 9 to discuss Dutch thinking leading up to the September 13-14 NATO Informal Defense Ministerial in Berlin. Reyn handed over an 11-point paper (provided below) that Dutch Defense Minister Kamp will deliver in Berlin. Reyn explained that Kamp took NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer's request seriously to propose what NATO might look like in the next 15 years. As such, Reyn suggested that some of Kamp's proposals are controversial for some European Allies and lie "outside the box".

2. (C) Cont. Summary: The paper advocates an expanded role for the NATO Response Force (NRF), a greater NATO role in maritime security, a major policy change in favor of missile defense for Europe, and increased NATO coordination with the UN, the EU, and the African Union (AU). Polmiloff also discussed Washington's recent proposal for a mini-summit in 2006, followed by a major summit in 2008. Reyn noted that the Dutch would examine the proposal, but added that a mini-summit focusing entirely upon transformation and capabilities "might not be enough". End summary.

NATO Response Force

3. (C) Reyn explained that the Dutch have come around on using the NRF more frequently. Previously, the Dutch had erred on the side of caution, siding on occasion with the French to limit the use of the NRF. Now, the Dutch are more willing to support NRF deployments. Reyn noted that there are still some concerns regarding undermining force generation efforts -- the NRF should not fill gaps that should be filled through other mechanisms. Reyn added that the Dutch see little distinction between the NRF and the strategic reserve forces; this burdens the Alliance with unnecessary financial costs. Reyn concluded with a pitch to get the USG more involved with the NRF through force contributions -- hopefully land-based. He added that many Allies see USG participation in the NRF as an opportunity to enhance interoperability by "working with the best". Polmiloff suggested that USG land-based assets were actively engaged in other efforts in the global war on terrorism.

Maritime Security and Terrorism

4. (C) Reyn stated that the Dutch will actively support NATO Secretary General De Hoop Scheffer's recent paper regarding

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NATO's valued added contribution in the fight against terrorism. Reyn suggested that NATO might play an active role in enhancing maritime security and by fighting piracy. He argued that current NATO maritime operations, such as Operation Active Endeavour, were largely symbolic and limited in scope -- NATO should focus on areas with high rates of piracy, such as the Straits of Malacca or the coast of Somalia.

Missile Defense

5. (C) Reyn noted that the Dutch are beginning to think about a missile defense system to protect the European theater -- this reflects a major policy change for the Dutch government. Previously, the Dutch considered missile defense too costly and controversial. However, with uncertainty over the missile programs of a number of countries -- most notably Iran -- Reyn stated that a missile defense system was now necessary. He added that Defense Minister Kamp is very interested in missile defense, having first mentioned it during a speech in April 2004. Kamp's speech at Berlin will officially acknowledge that the Dutch are now in favor of missile defense for Europe.

Coordination with UN, EU, and the African Union

6. (C) Reyn stated that NATO should be more forthcoming and responsive to the UN; coordination between the two

organizations is lacking. As such, NATO should make clear that it is willing to deploy in support of a UN operation once the NRF is fully operational in October 2006. In the same vein, NATO could also offer its services to assist planning and logistics in support of a UN operation. Reyn added that the Netherlands is finding it very difficult to participate in inefficient and inadequately-planned UN missions; NATO support to the UN would assist in this regard.

Reyn also suggested that NATO should become more actively engaged in security sector reform, and increase ties with the African Union to help it become a more effective regional organization.

Two Summit Approach

17. (C) Polmiloff pitched the two-summit outlined in reftel. Reyn confirmed that the Dutch government is examining the idea, and supports it in principle. He suggested, however, that a mini-summit in 2006 focusing just on transformation and capabilities may not "be enough". Polmiloff stressed the importance of nailing down transformation at 26 prior to enlargement considerations. Plus, a summit focusing on transformation and capabilities should focus on a fully operational NRF, success in Afghanistan, force generation reform, and "recapitalizing" the Alliance. Reyn noted that the Dutch have looked at possible ways to reform the NATO cost-sharing mechanism, but had no new initiatives.

Kamp Paper for Berlin NATO Informal Defense Ministerial

18. Begin text:

- A Practical Vision for a Stronger NATO

- Henk Kamp, NL Minister of Defense

The Secretary General, in his letter of July 29th, expressed justifiable concern about the slow progress on NATO's transformation. He called for a discussion of the political environment in which NATO will be operating in the future. I will gladly take up his call by offering you my thoughts about what the Alliance should accomplish in the next ten years. By doing so, I hope to contribute to the Comprehensive Political Guidance to be completed before the end of this year.

NATO's "to do list" in the next ten years, as I see it, must include the following:

- Maintain the military predominance of the alliance: NATO should continue to be the world's most powerful military coalition. Transatlantic cooperation within the NATO framework provides the best guarantee for peace and security in the NATO treaty area -- and in particular on the European continent -- in the 21st century. It also continues to provide an indispensable avenue for projecting stability in other parts of the world and for supporting the international rule of law.

- Provide a more relevant forum for security consultation among allies: NATO's future depends on the willingness of all allies -- North American and European -- to consult each other in the world's important security issues and to build a security consensus. There is room for improvement, both in the context of discussing NATO's current operations (e.g. Afghanistan) and beyond. If NATO is indeed based on shared values and interests, is there not much to be gained from a more active political discussion? Is this not the best way to foster transatlantic unity? I support the efforts of the SG and encourage him to come forward with further proposals.

- Strengthen NATO as an instrument for collective action: In today's world, only effective multilateral action can provide lasting solutions. Against this background, it is vital to make the NATO Response Force (NRF) into a more effective and useful tool. There must be a greater willingness to deploy the NRF, of course without using the NRF to fill gaps that should be filled otherwise. The sharp distinction between the NRF and the Strategic Reserve Forces (SRF) makes little sense in practice and burdens us with unnecessarily high costs. We should reconsider the policy on this issue. In addition, I encourage greater involvement of the US, not only with critical enablers but also with US troops in the NRF to underscore that it is NATO's pre-eminent tool for collective action.

- Ensure the interoperability of our armed forces: One of NATO's most important functions continues to be to ensure that our armed forces can operate together. Standardisation, interoperability, and collective generation of military capabilities remain at the core of NATO's work. There is, however, still a lot to be gained in terms of efficiency as well as interoperability from further standardisation and a reduction of the diversity of weapon systems being developed

or used. We should make more substantial progress on enhancing the usability of our forces, including by adapting NATO's planning mechanisms.

- Deliver a more effective contribution in the fight against terrorism: The scourge of terrorism will be with us for the foreseeable future. The military plays an important role in combating it. NATO's actual response to the terrorist threat on the whole has been too haphazard. There is a need to better define NATO's role and contribution in support of UNSG Annan's comprehensive counter-terrorism strategy to be welcomed at the UN Summit in September and adopted by the UN General Assembly. NATO's contribution to combating terrorist organisations and their infrastructure could be more robust, both in the framework of its current operations (e.g. in Afghanistan) and of protecting important sea lanes and maritime assets against terrorist attacks and piracy.

- Protect NATO territory against the growing missile threat: Given the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and missile technology, NATO cannot forever evade the question whether the whole of its territory needs to be protected against long-range missiles of countries of risk. We need to further discuss the options and costs of such protection. An effective missile defence system is only feasible within a NATO framework (for military-operational, political and financial reasons).

- Reform NATO's mechanism for generating forces for operations: The difficulty in generating troops and capabilities for NATO's mission in Afghanistan has brought the inadequacy of its current force generation system to light. This is partly a political problem. In my view, political consensus within NATO to start an operation generally entails a commitment by all to participate militarily, and share in the burdens and the risks of an operation. Yet it is also a matter of reforming the force generation system, to lower the threshold for nations to participate. This reform will have to include the increasing use of common funding mechanisms for critical enablers and common infrastructure in theatre and for deployments such as the NRF.

- Build more effective and cooperative relationships with the UN, the EU, and the AU: With the UN, NATO's institutional relationship is so far underdeveloped (even as NATO cooperates closely with UN missions in the Balkans and Afghanistan). When the NRF becomes operational in October 2006, NATO should make clear that it could be deployed following a request by the UN. NATO could also be more active in providing planning support for UN peacekeeping operations. NATO and the UN should continue discussions on how the military and civil aspects of crisis management and peacekeeping operations could be coordinated better. With the EU, there already exists a well-established system of collaboration ('Berlin-plus'). Yet the relationship is too often hampered by political and bureaucratic rivalry. We should insist on developing the habit of cooperation and more regular contacts at all levels of bureaucracy and at the ministerial level. Our cooperation should cover the widest possible range of issues, including terrorism. With the AU, NATO should build on the Sudan experience to seek ways to support it to become an increasingly effective regional organisation.

- Make a more effective NATO contribution to solving the problem of weak states: Weak states are a major source of problems. In all its operations, NATO is heavily involved in promoting good governance. It has a wealth of experience with defence reform in the context of its Partnership for Peace program. NATO is therefore well placed to provide valuable support in security sector reform (SSR) and demobilisation, disarmament, and reintegration (DDR). Yet NATO needs to become more active in supporting weak states (coordinating its efforts with in particular the UN, the AU, and the EU).

- Provide support to national authorities: There is a growing interdependency between internal and external security. NATO should respond to legitimate requests from member states for assistance, such as during the Olympic games in Greece. In such cases, deployments of NATO assets in support of national authorities should be financed by the requesting country. Armed forces clearly also have a role to play in response to massive natural disasters such as the Asian tsunami or the New Orleans floods. In such cases, NATO could act as a coordinating agency, making use of the EADRCC.

- Last but not least, bring missions that NATO undertakes to a successful conclusion: NATO's credibility depends on the results of the missions it undertakes:

-- Afghanistan: NATO will extend operations over all of Afghanistan in 2006. This will be a momentous moment on the history of the Alliance. Military involvement through ISAF will remain necessary in the coming years. The role of NATO

will gradually evolve into that of a security enabler: increasing Afghan ownership and building up the Afghan security forces. Coordination and cooperation between the different SSR-components (military and civilian) should be enhanced, for instance to promote the rule of law. For security in the provinces, PRTs will remain the main vehicle. The reconstruction and stabilisation processes are mutually reinforcing. NATO's input into the post-Bonn strategy is an important first step towards a responsible exit strategy. When would it be safe to transfer full control to the Afghan authorities? What can NATO usefully do in this regard? Should NATO assume a bigger role in training Afghan forces?

-- Iraq: NATO's training mission is still hampered by lingering divisions within the Alliance concerning Iraq as well as by the security situation in Iraq. All member states should nonetheless ensure that this mission makes an effective contribution towards stabilising Iraq. A stable Iraq is in the vital interest of all. If circumstances so dictate, NATO should be prepared to train more Iraqi personnel outside the country.

-- Kosovo: NATO continues to have a vital interest in transforming the Balkans into a stable region. Its operational focus will be on Kosovo. In the next few years, NATO should focus on helping to create the conditions for resolving the definitive status of Kosovo. This will be of utmost importance to the future stability of the region.

End text.

BLAKEMAN